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ABSTRACT

The operations of a citizen committee associated with two neighborhood public schools in the Boston area were studied to evaluate empirically the effectiveness of the committee in achieving certain policy goals. A case study approach to citizen committee power to influence educational decisionmaking was made in the areas of finance, curriculum, and personnel. Survey data reveal a positive relationship between perception of and/or participation in the committee and feelings of direct and representational influence over and identification with school decisionmaking. However, while participation in the citizen committee seems to increase citizen feelings of control over school decisionmaking, the case studies demonstrate that, in fact, these committees have no influence. (Author/MLF)

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AN EVALUATION OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN AN URBAN SCHOOL

PAPER PRESENTED AT

AMERICAN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

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I. Introduction

In the 1960's a social movement was underway to promote the meaningful participation of citizens in the decision-making processes affecting their lives and their communities. This movement was in direct response to feelings of powerlessness that were being experienced by many groups living in a complex bureaucratic society. To alleviate the feelings of powerlessness, federal programs were implemented which provided for and encouraged the poor to participate in the delivery of federally sponsored services. The implementation of these programs coincided with an increased awareness among youth and minority groups, particularly black militants, that there must be popular control of institutions immediate to their lives. The legitimacy of existing educational, health, and other social service institutions was questioned when these groups proclaimed that the traditional bureaucratic structures were incapable of serving their immediate needs. Traditionally excluded from centralized bureaucratic decision-making, they now wished to be included in and/or possibly even control decision-making processes.

The concept of citizen participation has become an official governmental policy with regard to federally-sponsored educational programs for the "culturally-deprived child" (as policy-makers and educators call poor and lower-class children).[1] Project Head-Start and Follow-Through, perhaps the most publicized programs of the War on Poverty, sought to increase parent participation in the education of their children by requiring parent involvement in the "... development, conduct and overall program direction of all projects."[2] While the 1965 Elementary

and Secondary School Act was not directly concerned with citizen participation, subsequent guidelines were.[3] The Office of Education has the responsibility for administering many programs which encourage or require citizen participation.[4]

A parallel expansion of the citizen participation policy has occurred at the state and municipal levels of government. The recently-passed Massachusetts Bilingual Education Act affords parents the right to "maximum practical involvement" in the "planning, development, and evaluation" of the programs serving their children.[5] In the mid-1960's, cries for decentralization and local control of neighborhood schools were voiced by many poor, militant parents in such cities as New York, Boston, and Detroit. After paralyzing strikes of the New York City school system decentralization and local control have been implemented.

Educational administrators as well as poor militants have favored more citizen participation in education. Taking their cue from social science research, the administrators tend to believe that giving "culturally-deprived" parents feelings of control over the education of their children will increase parent saliency of educational issues and, more importantly, parent interest in their children's school work.

However, because the administrators have not as yet received any empirical evidence to validate this hypothesis, they do not give unqualified support to the citizen participation policy. Teacher unions and upper level board of education bureaucrats have viewed the policy as a direct threat to their political power bases. Also, parent leaders have criticized as mere pacification the implementation of weak citizen

participation policies which might give the image of true citizen involvement but which do not allow parents to make basic policy determinations.

Parents, educational administrators and politicians are all interested in whether or not the citizen participation policy has proven effective. This paper will first develop a conceptual framework for discussing the effectiveness of the citizen participation policy and then will begin to test empirically the conceptual framework on a neighborhood school level.

II. The Conceptual Framework

A. Definitions

In order to avoid the conceptual confusion that often infects discussions concerning the policy of citizen participation, the following set of operational definitions will be utilized in this paper.

1. Citizens

Parents who send their children to the school under study are citizens. Residents who live in the community in which the school is located but do not have children attending the school under study are non-citizens.

2. Participation

Participation, which may be thought of as a continuum, is defined as any input into the decision-making process of an educational program. At one pole the input has no impact upon the generation of policy, while at the other pole the input is dispositive.[6]

3. Citizen Participation Structure

Those institutional mechanisms through which the citizen participation policy operates are citizen participation structures, e.g., public hearings,

volunteers, indigenous para-profrssional hiring policies, and citizen committee mechanisms. In this study the citizen committee mechanism will be the only structure studied.[7] A citizen committee is composed of at least one-third citizens.

4. Citizen Participation Outcomes

Citizen participation outcomes are produced as a result of the establishment of a citizen participation structure and are divided into three descriptive categories: political, socio-psychological, and programmatic.

a. Political Outcomes

Political outcomes refer to an increase or decrease in citizen political power, which is defined as the ability of X to make Y do Z, when Y would not otherwise have done Z. Power may be exercised within or outside a specific neighborhood school.

b. Socio-Psychological Outcomes

Socio-psychological outcomes, which include alienation, self-concept, and perception of one's ability to control his own life, may be related to specified educational services or society in general. In this paper these outcomes are only related to citizen feelings of direct control, representational control, and identification with school policy-making processes.

c. Programmatic Outcomes

Programmatic outcomes consist of changes in citizen attitudes and behavior with regard to the delivery of educational services. This study will measure parent saliency of school affairs and parent interest

in their children's school work.

B. Evaluation Design

This study poses the question of how effective the citizen participation structure (the citizen committee) is in fulfilling the political, socio-psychological, and programmatic policy outcomes. The significance of these outcomes will be evaluated from the perspective of the poor and lower class citizens and educational administrators.

C. Descriptive Models

The inter-relationships between these three policy outcomes and the committee structure are best explained by two descriptive models: the participation model and the structural modification model. It is only through the operation of one or both of these models that the committee produces the relevant policy outcomes.

1. The Participation Model

The participation model is based upon two related sets of social science theories. First, the culture of poverty theory, which provides a set of propositions describing the life situation of the poor, was at the heart of the compensatory nature of much of the Johnson administration's Great Society educational and poverty programming. Second, the participation hypothesis, which is derived from small group, industrial psychology, and behavior modification research, suggests an action strategy directly responsive to and corrective of the traits and characteristics noted in the culture of poverty.

a. The Culture of Poverty Theory

The culture of poverty theory, which was first delineated by Oscar

Lewis, argued that large sections of the poor are socio-psychologically and culturally deviant.[8] A crucial element of the culture of poverty is that the poor are "dis-engaged" from and "non-integrative" into the major institutions of society.[9] Because of an adaptation and reaction to their marginal positions in society the poor do not share the traditional value orientations of the majority. As Lewis stated, they have formed a "subculture of Western society with its own structure and rationale, a way of life handed down from generation to generation along family lines."[10] He argued that the social life of the poor is shaped by their teaching separate cultural patterns to each generation, making the sub-culture self-perpetuating. Lewis noted that "By the time slum children are six or seven, they have usually absorbed the basic values and attitudes of their sub-culture and are not psychologically geared to take full advantage of changing conditions or increased opportunities which may occur in their lifetime."[11] Valentine pointed out that "It is this idea which more than any other has been enlarged upon and re-emphasized over and over to justify programs designed to inculcate middle-class values and virtues among the poor and especially their children rather than changing the condition of their existence."[12]

Lewis associated many psychological orientations with this deviant cultural milieu: a keen sense of the personal and concrete; inability to delay satisfaction and to plan for the future; resignation and fatalism; strong feelings of marginality, helplessness, dependency, and inferiority; inability to cooperate in problem-solving; confusion of sexual identification; weak ego structure; lack of participation in extra-familial

activities.[13]

In the field of education careful note has been taken of Lewis' work. Educators have used the culture of poverty theory as an ideological basis for their rubric, "the culturally-deprived child." The concept of cultural deprivation is used as the frame of reference for rationalizing academic failures among "disadvantaged children." Frank Riessman defines the nature of cultural deprivation as "those aspects of middle-class culture - such as education, books, formal language - from which these groups have not benefited."[14] Educational psychologists such as Ausbel, Deutsch, and Riessman have concluded that these children lack the necessary home preparation to succeed in school, and they urged compensatory education programs to free the child from "the shackles of the earlier environment."[15] Hence, Project Head Start, as noted by Gladwin, was "launched based on the assumption that once an adequately prepared child enters school he will be able to keep up with middle-class children all the way through and thus ideally at least be prepared to step into a middle-class role as soon as his schooling is completed."[16]

b. The Participation Hypothesis

A central component of the culture of poverty subculture is the poor population's deep felt sense of powerlessness to control its own destiny. It is this psychological dimension which social science holds out as a possible key to the modification of the dysfunctional behavioral attributes of the culture of poverty.

The research of Gore and Rotter has shown that individuals who perceive themselves as determiners of their own fate tend to commit

themselves to decisive personal and social action.[17] Rotter's review of personal efficacy research lends support to such a conclusion:

> A series of studies provides strong support for the hypothesis that he who thinks he controls his own destiny is likely to (a) be more alert to those aspects of the environment which provide useful information for his future behavior; (b) take steps to improve his environmental conditions; (c) place greater value on skill or achievement reinforcements and be generally more concerned with his ability, particularly his failures...[18]

These findings suggest that the personal efficacy dimension may function as a social catalyst which contributes to the over-all amelioration of the culture of poverty's deviant behavioral pattern. A corallary to the preceding finding is the hypothesis that planned behavior change is facilitated by the development of a positive sense of personal efficacy among the population which is the subject of the change process. The genesis of this hypothesis is found in the industrial psychology literature.

The classic Hawthorne experiments of the late 1930's are an example of such research.[19] There, the "planned behavior change" consisted of increasing industrial worker productivity. One strategy employed to stimulate this outcome was to ask the workers for advice concerning various operational aspects of the experiments. Such consultation greatly increased the workers' feelings of being able to control their work experience. Mayo concluded that such an increase in worker efficacy was associated with increased worker productivity.

Other studies have shown that the productivity of industrial work groups can be greatly enhanced when methods are employed which give

more responsibility to them and which allow for greater participation in important decisions. In their study, Coch and French divided employees into four groups: one non-participating group, two directly participating groups, and one representational participating group. Higher production rates in the participating groups were explained by the fact that workers did not perceive arbitrary rule and felt that they had a part in controlling production rates.[20]

The Coch and French study was replicated in a Norwegian factory by French, Israel, and As in 1960.[21] In the later study, however, production rates did not increase in the directly participating group. The researchers concluded that this group did not perceive the decisions in which they participated as related to production. Hence, mere participation in group discussions may not be as important in raising production rates as perception of participating in meaningful decision-making.

Fleishman, and Lawrence and Smith support these findings. Fleishman concluded that "direct participation of individual workers may not be as important an incentive as their perception of the groups' participation in these work changes."[22] Lawrence and Smith showed the need to set meaningful group goals, as opposed to only holding group discussions.[23]

The small group literature supports the findings of industrial psychology research. For example, Lippitt and White, in their famous series of experiments with three types of group leadership - authoritarian, democratic, and laissez faire - found that the democratic leadership style best yielded the desired behavior change effects.[24] In this experiment the democratically-styled groups were positively related to low levels of aggression and discontent, high levels of work output, and

originality.

Other studies on the variations of the authoritarian-democratic leadership styles confirm these results. For example, Preston and Heintz,[25] and Hare [26] compared "participatory" leaders with "supervisory" leaders. Their data indicated that participatory leadership was the more effective mechanism for attitudinal and behavioral change than was supervisory leadership. They concluded that in a participatory setting each person had an opportunity to express his opinion. Although the group may not have accepted the opinion, people felt more satisfied with the experience because they had an opportunity to express themselves. Other studies involve "teacher-centered" vs. "learner-centered" classrooms.[27] It was found that in "learner-centered" classes, where students perceive themselves as having relatively equal control, as opposed to teacher-controlled situations, there was less anxiety, greater social interaction, and positive feelings among members.

In other studies which differed from small group research there is evidence to show that organizational affiliation correlates positively with feelings of control over one's destiny.[28] In one of the more controlled studies for self-selection, Helene Levens studied clients of Aid to Families with Dependent Children who were members of welfare organizations and clients who were non-members.[29] She concluded that the fact that the two groups did not differ on certain key demographic variables which predicted powerlessness suggested that the primary cause of higher efficacy levels for organizational members was not differential self-selection but organizational affiliation.

Cloward and Jones' study of the attitudes of lower- and middle-income families toward education linked organizational affiliation both with efficacy and planned programmatic attitudinal and behavioral change outcomes.[30] The study found that active lower-class participants in a P.T.A. organization as well as active and non-active middle-class participants believed that education increased success opportunities for their children, whereas non-active lower-class parents felt that success was related to "luck" or "whom you know."

In sum, social science research developed a participation hypothesis which suggested that planned attitudinal and behavioral change was facilitated when the subject of such change either had some degree of real or perceived control over that change process.

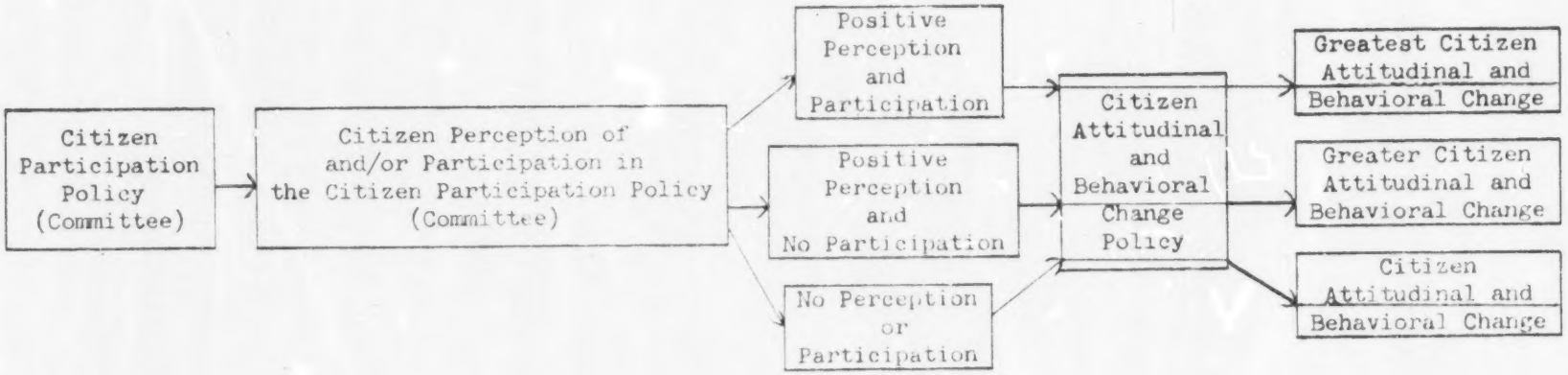
c. Delineation of the Participation Model

The preceding review of social science research lays the basis of an action model with four components (see Figure 1).

First, the citizen participation policy is initiated and the committee mechanism is established. Second, the citizen may or may not perceive and/or actively participate in the committee. Within the context of the committee participation policy different forms of participation are most common. The citizen may (1) simply perceive the existence of the citizen participation committee structure; (2) attend meetings of the committee; (3) informally communicate views concerning educational policy to the committee members; (4) serve as a member of a committee's constituency organization; (5) vote for representatives to the policy-making board of the committee; (6) serve as a member of the policy-making

Figure 1

THE PARTICIPATION MODEL


Citizen Participation Policy (Committee)
Citizen Perception of and/or Participation in the Citizen Participation Policy (Committee)
Positive Perception and Participation
Positive Perception and No Participation
No Perception or Participation
Citizen Attitudinal and Behavioral Change Policy
Greatest Citizen Attitudinal and Behavioral Change
Greater Citizen Attitudinal and Behavioral Change
Citizen Attitudinal and Behavioral Change

board of the committee. Third, a citizen attitudinal and behavioral change policy must be implemented to correct the culture of poverty deviances. For example, programs are designed to increase parent interest in their children's school work.

Fourth, the output of this model is the citizen attitudinal and behavioral change which is actually induced by the citizen participation policy. The logic of the participation model suggests that upon exposure to the citizen attitudinal and behavioral change policy the greatest changes will be induced among those individuals who perceive and/or participate in the participation structure.

For example, an Italian parent who has difficulty reading English may be more interested in his/her child's school work if the child's report card is written in Italian as well as English, even though the parent may not know who instituted this policy of bi-lingual report cards. However, the model assumes that a parent who perceives and/or participates in the participation structure will be more interested in his/her child's education than will a parent who does not perceive and/or participate in the structure. In this model, the institution of the citizen participation policy is only considered effective if it brings about the desired attitudinal and behavioral changes.

A key section of this model is the second component. The perception of and/or participation in the committee is supposed to make the citizen feel that he has some degree of control over educational services. This newly developed sense of efficacy is then supposed to act as a catalyst for educators' planned attitudinal and behavioral change policies,

e.g., parents who feel they have a say in making educational decisions will be more interested in their children's school work. In this model perception of and/or participation in the structure serve as a proxy for high efficacy over educational decision-making processes. Whether the citizen participation policy actually increases citizen control over educational decision-making processes is not the central issue. Instead, it is the citizen's perception of control which activates this model for the planned attitudinal and behavioral changes.

The model is designed to have a direct impact on the socio-psychological and programmatic outcomes and does not address the issue of political outcomes. It is hypothesized that the socio-psychological outcomes serve as a means to programmatic ends.

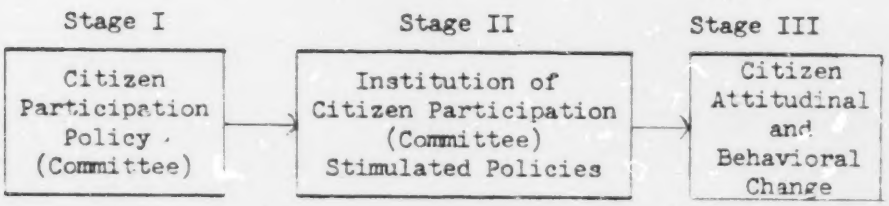
2. The Structural Modification Model

The second descriptive model relies upon the stimulus of structural modification, e.g., the citizen attitudinal and behavioral change policy brought about by the citizen committee to induce planned attitudinal and behavioral changes (see Figure 2). In this context the citizen may be unaware of the citizen participation structure and only be aware of or affected by the actual institution of the citizen stimulated policy.

For example, a parent who exhibits little interest in his/her child's school work will probably be unaware that the school possesses an educational policy-making committee. However, if such a committee helps to institute an effective bi-lingual report card system which helps a non-English-speaking parent understand his/her child's progress, then the report card policy has affected the parent's attitude toward

Figure 2

THE STRUCTURAL MODIFICATION MODEL



the child. The parent's perception of and/or participation in a committee is not the operative factor here. Instead, structural modification of the school's reporting system, the bi-lingual report card, accounts for the citizen's attitudinal and behavioral change.

This model directly addresses the political and programmatic outcomes.[31] The political power which is suggested by the implementation of such citizen imposed policies serves as an intervening variable between the establishment of the citizen committee and the attitudinal and behavioral change processes. The implementation of citizen participation stimulated policies does not necessarily produce positive programmatic outcomes. This fact must be empirically evaluated in each situation.

The model may also have an indirect effect on the socio-psychological area. For example, at a neighborhood school a citizen committee may initiate a policy whereby parents are allowed to select teachers for a particular program. One of the potential attitudinal and behavioral outcomes of such a policy may be a decrease in parent alienation from the school.

III. Empirical Test of the Conceptual Framework

A. Research Design

The study poses the question of how successful the citizen committee has been in achieving the political, socio-psychological, and programmatic goals. To answer this question, the study has utilized the structural modification model to test the political goals and the participation model to test the socio-psychological and programmatic goals.

From the spring of 1971 to the winter of 1973, the operations of a

citizen committee associated with two neighborhood schools in the Boston area were studied. The committee was both a traditional P.T.A. school-community participation mechanism and also representative of the anti-poverty citizen participation model encouraged by the federal government. The committee, which had been active for four years, was a locally initiated program which received no federal subsidy.

The test of the structural modification model utilized a case study approach. Citizen committee power to influence educational decision-making was assessed in three key issue areas: finance; curriculum; and personnel decisions. Information concerning the citizen decision-making role was obtained through the utilization of three methodologies: document review; interviews with relevant citizens and professionals; and participant observation of the neighborhood school and committee organizational meetings.

The methodology utilized in testing the participation model was survey research. Random samples of citizens who sent their children to the schools under study were drawn from school registers. One hundred thirty-four parents were interviewed out of a total school population of three hundred sixty families. Since the first concern was to consider citizen participation from the viewpoint of parents, looking at the policy from the bottom up, rather than using the traditional approach of an elite analysis, committee officers were excluded from the master list of parents.

The findings produced by the research design must be treated cautiously since the scope of issues investigated in the analysis was limited. First,

only the committee form of the citizen participation policy was studied. Second, only influence as it related to the particular school was examined, e.g., neighborhood political issues were not studied. Third, investigation of the political outcomes was limited to case studies of only three substantive areas. Fourth, only rank and file citizens (non-committee officers) were included in the study. Fifth, operationalizations of the socio-psychological and programmatic outcomes did not cover all the possible analytical dimensions which may define these sets of policy outcomes.

B. Description of Committee Under Study

The committee, which was a local Home and School Association attached to two public schools in a lower-working class Italian area of Boston with a median income of $6,000 to $6,999, was formally connected with the central Boston Home and School Association. The central Association was financed primarily by the Boston School Department, which employed a special manager to supervise and maintain all records.

Each local Home and School Association was open to all parents and teachers of pupils attending particular Boston public schools. The committee consisted of dues-paying members and an executive board composed of a president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer who were elected annually by the membership. The committee devoted much time to fund-raising activities in an attempt to raise money to improve the quality of educational services.

C. The Results

1. The Structural Modification Model

If the citizen committee has achieved political power by instituting educational policies, then one aspect of the structural modification model has been fulfilled. To see if the committee under study has obtained any political power, the policy-making role of the committee will be examined in three areas.

a. Finance

Since the school organization was connected to public schools, its control of the budget was greatly limited. The central school department allocated the per-pupil expenditures for the schools and controlled the amount of federal and state funds which the schools received. The area of Boston in which the schools were located was usually the last area of the city to receive federal or state funds for special programs and the first area to have the programs eliminated when there were budget cuts, possibly because the area was largely Italian, whereas the central school authorities were Irish. While the committee pressured the Boston School Committee for equal treatment, it failed to obtain its share of resources. Hence, the committee had little influence over school finance.

b. Curriculum

Again, since the organization was associated with public schools, major curriculum decisions were made by the central school department. The committee might have been able to influence minor curriculum changes through its fund-raising activities by spending a few thousand dollars

per year on educational innovations, but instead turned over all its funds to the school principal, who decided how to spend them. Therefore, the committee had no influence over school curriculum.

c. Personnel

The central school department established the criteria for selection and hired and fired all school personnel: administrators, teachers, teacher aides, and clerical staff. With the exception of two teacher-aides, the staff was Irish-Catholic, although the neighborhood was ninety-five per cent Italian. While some parents became active in the committee in the hope of getting acquainted with the principal and thus obtaining a teacher-aide position, they were not successful. In essence, the committee had no influence over school personnel.

d. Summary

Citizen initiation of educational policies failed because of the following reasons: First, educational professionals at the neighborhood schools successfully opposed citizen initiatives. Second, administrative units above the neighborhood level, e.g., the central school committee, pre-empted local decision-making. Third, economic factors, e.g., loss of federal funds, foreclosed the initiation of citizen committee policies.

These findings suggest that the citizen committee did not achieve any political outcomes because it failed to institute any citizen committee educational policies at neighborhood schools. Therefore, the second stage of the structural modification model was not researched.

2. The Participation Model

a. Socio-Psychological Outcomes

The socio-psychological outcomes were operationalized along three dimensions: perception of direct personal influence in educational decision-making; perception of representational influence in educational decision-making; and feeling of identification with educational decision-making. The following survey question measured perception of direct personal influence: "How much say do you have in what _____ school decides to do?" The survey question "How much say do other people have in what _____ school decides to do?" measured perception of representational influence. The survey question "Do you think that most of the people who run things at _____ school are people like yourself or outsiders?" measured feelings of identification with the decision-making process. Because of the small sample size the responses to these survey questions were dichotomized. According to the participation model the perception of and/or participation in committee activities are supposed to create feelings of direct and representational control over and feelings of identification with educational decision-making. Actual participation in committee activities, i.e., attending committee meetings, would most probably produce a stronger impact on feelings of control over and identification with educational decision-making than would the mere perception or lack of perception of citizen committees.

Perception of the committee structure was measured by an organizational screening question. The interviewer read a list of organizations and committees in the neighborhood and the respondent indicated if any of

these structures seemed familiar. Participation in the committee structure was measured by the number of meetings which the citizen attended. The respondents were divided into three participatory categories: those who perceived the existence of the committee structure and attended one or more meetings; those who perceived the existence of the committee structure but never attended a meeting; and those who did not perceive the existence of the committee structure and therefore did not attend any meetings.

According to the participation model a higher percentage of active rank-and-file perticipants, i.e., those who perceived the committee and attended at least one meeting, should feel more direct and representational influence over and identification with school decision-making than should inactive parents. Tables 1-3 indicate that such a positive relationship does in fact exist.[32]

While there are positive relationships in Tables 1, 2, and 3, they are not particularly strong, possibly because the participation hypothesis was largely derived from small group and industrial psychology research, in which the perception of power or participation in group decision-making rarely occurred among aggregations of more than one hundred people, who were usually in close interpersonal contact with each other. The neighborhood school setting is much different, for the social interaction is not as intense. Since the participation model operated outside the small group, it did not produce strong positive relationships with socio-psychological educational program outputs. If this model can not operate within the context of the typical social

Table 1

The Relationship Between
Levels of Participation in the Committee
and Perceived Direct Influence

Levels of Participation	Direct Influence: Some Say	Direct Influence: No Say	N
Positive Perception and Attended Meetings	14 25%	42 75%	56
Positive Perception and Never Attended Meetings	4 8%	47 92%	51
Negative Perception and Never Attended Meetings	3 12%	23 88%	26
			Total N = 133

Tau beta Correlation
.17

Table 2

The Relationship Between
Levels of Participation in the Committee
and Perceived Representational Influence

Levels of Participation	Representational Influence: Some Say	No Say	N
Positive Perception and Attended Meetings	23 41%	33 59%	56
Positive Perception and Never Attended Meetings	13 25%	38 75%	51
Negative Perception and Never Attended Meetings	5 19%	21 81%	26
			Total N = 133

Tau beta Correlation
.19

Table 3

The Relationship Between
Levels of Participation in the Committee
and Feelings of Identification

Levels of Participation	Identification: Like Me	Identification: Outsiders	N
Positive Perception and Attended Meetings	44 77%	13 23%	57
Positive Perception and Never Attended Meetings	29 57%	22 43%	51
Negative Perception and Never Attended Meetings	17 65%	9 35%	26
			Total N = 134

Tau beta Correlation
.14

interaction between the neighborhood school organization and the citizen, then a basic assumption of the poverty program of the federal government is not valid.

b. Programmatic Outcomes

Programmatic outcomes were operationalized along two dimensions: the saliency of educational services and preventive behavior. Saliency of educational services refers to parent knowledge of and interest in school affairs, variables which are important if parents are to hold school administrators accountable for the quality of educational services. The following two survey questons measured saliency: "What is the name of the principal at the _____ school?" "Would you say that you are more interested in school affairs, less interested, or feel about the same since sending your child to the _____ school?"

Preventive behavior refers to increasing parent interest in their children's school work. Such parent interest is thought to minimize the problems which schools face in educating children from poor and lower-class families. Lack of parent interest in their children's school work is considered an important contributing factor to academic failure. The following survey question measured preventive behavior: "Would you say you are more interested in your child's school work, less interested, or feel about the same since sending your child to the _____ school?" As in the analysis of the socio-psychological outcomes, each of the programmatic variables was dichotomized because of the small sample size.

In the schools under study special citizen attitudinal and behavioral

change policies attempted to increase saliency of school affairs and parent interest in their children's school work by means of open houses, telephone contacts, parent-teacher conferences and notes sent home by the children.

As previously noted, the existence of attitudinal and behavioral change policies is critical to the operation of the participation model. The sense of educational efficacy created by the perception of and participation in the committee structure should raise the effectiveness of these attitudinal and behavioral change policies, which should therefore work more effectively among citizens who perceive and/or participate in a citizen committee than among citizens who are unaware of the existence of the committee.

Tables 4 and 5 show that greater attitudinal change occurs with citizens who perceive and participate in the organization. There is more than a twenty per cent difference between active and inactive participants on both saliency dimensions.

However, as can be seen from Table 6, there is no relationship on the preventive behavior dimensions. It appears that the attitudinal and behavioral change policies affect citizens on all levels of participation in the same way. The participation model seems to be ineffective here because this dimension involves changing parent and child interaction patterns, which are more stable relationships than parent attitudes toward the school. Such a conclusion seriously questions the empirical validity of the participation model.

Table 4

The Relationship Between
Levels of Participation in the Committee
and Saliency of Educational Services
(Knowledge of School Affairs)

Levels of Participation	Knowledge		
	Correct	Incorrect	N
Positive Perception and Attended Meetings	36 63%	21 37%	57
Positive Perception and Never Attended Meetings	36 71%	15 29%	51
Negative Perception and Never Attended Meetings	11 42%	15 58%	26
			Total N = 134

Tau beta Correlation
.17

Table 5

The Relationship Between
Levels of Participation in the Committee
and Saliency of Educational Services
(Interest in School Affairs)

Levels of Participation	Interest: More	Interest: Less	N
Positive Perception and Attended Meetings	35 61%	22 39%	57
Positive Perception and Never Attended Meetings	21 41%	30 59%	51
Negative Perception and Never Attended Meetings	10 39%	16 61%	26
			Total N = 134

Tau beta Correlation
.19

Table 6

The Relationship Between
Levels of Participation in the Committee
and Preventive Behavior
(Interest in Children's School Work)

Levels of Participation	Interest: More	Interest: Less	N
Positive Perception and Attended Meetings	37 65%	20 35%	57
Positive Perception and Never Attended Meetings	35 68%	16 32%	51
Negative Perception and Never Attended Meetings	16 62%	10 38%	26
			Total N = 134

Tau beta Correlation
.00

C. Conclusions

The significance of these findings for educational policy must be interpreted cautiously. As was discussed previously, important aspects of the citizen participation policy have not been analyzed in this study. Further, the data analysis presented is preliminary; more extensive analysis involving other types of educational organizations is planned.[33]

The analysis of political outcomes through case studies reveals that the citizen committee was unable to institute any citizen attitudinal and behavioral change policies in areas of finance, curriculum, and personnel, and therefore was unable to generate any citizen influence over school policy.

The analysis of the socio-psychological goals reveals a positive relationship between perception of and/or participation in the committee and feelings of direct and representational influence over and identification with school decision-making. However, while participation in the citizen committee seems to increase citizen feelings of control over school decision-making, the case studies demonstrate that in fact these committees have no influence. It appears that the committee structure generates false consciousness in citizens who participate therein. This false consciousness is dysfunctional to the citizen and school administrator because parents feel satisfied with their roles and political mobilization by community organizers or administrators becomes a very difficult process.

False consciousness is also dysfunctional because if input into important school-related issues by citizens who feel control is ignored

the resulting frustrations among rank-and-file citizens may impair school-community relations.

The analysis of the programmatic goals reveals a positive relationship between perception of and/or participation in the committee and saliency of educational issues. From the perspective of the citizen and administrator increased saliency is an important outcome because knowledge of and interest in school affairs is a prerequisite for parent and administration promotion of educational change.

However, the analysis of the preventive behavior dimension shows no relationship with perception of and/or participation in the committee. From the viewpoint of a school administrator this finding calls into question the utility of the citizen participation policy to increase academic success of poor and lower-class children by means of increased parent involvement with their children's school work.

In the final analysis poor and lower-class parents and administrators must balance the positive and negative effects of the citizen participation policy before deciding to support it. This study provides some preliminary evidence for use in the making of this decision.

Footnotes

1. This study will only consider the concept of citizen participation as it relates to the improvement of delivery of social services to the poor and lower classes. While citizen participation was advocated prior to 1964 in relation to federal urban renewal policies, the original purpose of the urban renewal policies was not designed to help the poor directly.

2. U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Office of the General Counsel, "Statutory Bases in Legislation and Regulations for Citizen Participation in DHEW Programs" (Washington, D.C.: unpublished mimeographed paper, March, 1972), p. 12.

3. U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare Elementary and Secondary Education Act Program Guide (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, April 14, 1967).

4. Examples of educational acts requiring citizen participation are as follows: The Vocational Educational Act of 1963, Pub. L. 90-576, as amended by Pub. L. 91-230; The Library Services and Construction Act, Pub. L. 91-600, U.S. Code, Vol. XX, Sec. 351(a); The Emergency School Assistance Program, Pub. L. 91-380; The Education of the Handicapped Act, Pub. L. 91-230; The Drug Abuse Education Act, Pub. L. 91-516, U.S. Code, Vol. XXI, Sec. 1965; Environmental Education Act, Pub. L. 91-516.

5. Jeffrey W. Kobrick, "The Compelling Case for Bilingual Education," Saturday Review, April 29, 1972, p. 57.

6. In this discussion citizen participation is to be distinguished from both decentralization and community control. While an agency may decentralize by giving some measure of autonomy to neighborhood administrative units, this diffusion does not necessarily mean that the local community will have an input into the new neighborhood level policy-making process. For example, the fact that many public school departments have historically operated out of decentralized service delivery units (e.g., the neighborhood school) has not often in the past opened their decision-making process to community input.

On the other hand, community control implies that the representatives of the poor and lower class make the final policy decision on the delivery of educational services. A citizen participation policy may also be operative where the community input is less than dispositive. Community control, then, is merely one pole of the citizen participation continuum.

7. The citizen committee is the most pervasive form of the citizen participation policy. For example, as of January, 1973, 65 out of 86 DHEW grant programs which required or encouraged the implementation of

a citizen participation policy at the grantee level specified the citizen committee structure. In local, non-federal educational programs the citizen committee (P.T.A., Home and School Associations, locally-controlled school boards) have been a defining characteristic of citizen input in educational decision-making.

From the standpoint of the political goals of the citizen participation policy the citizen committee structure bears the most potential. Unlike the indigenous para-professional hiring policy, the principal purpose of the committee is to serve as a vehicle through which influence is exercised (RAND Corporation, "Citizen Participation in DHEW Programs," DHEW, Office of the Secretary, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Program Systems).

8. Oscar Lewis, Five Families: Mexican Case Studies in the Culture of Poverty (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1959), pp. 1-18.

9. Oscar Lewis, La Vida: A Puerto Rican Family in the Culture of Poverty - San Juan and New York (New York: Random House, 1965), pp. xi-xviii.

10. Ibid., p. xliii.

11. Ibid., p. xlv.

12. Charles Valentine, "The 'Culture of Poverty': Its Scientific Significance and Its Implications for Action," In The Culture of Poverty: A Critique (1971), p. 213.

13. Other social science data stress the uniqueness of the poor as a separate lower-class culture which is contrasted to middle-class values and orientations. See, for example, P. Rossi and Z. Blum, "Class, Status, and Poverty," In On Understanding Poverty (1969), pp. 36-39.

14. Frank Riessman, The Culturally Deprived Child (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), p. 3.

15. Riessman, The Culturally Deprived Child; Gladwin, Poverty, U.S.A., p. 27; David Ausbel, "A Teaching Strategy for Culturally Deprived Pupils: Cognitive and Motivational Considerations," In Education and Social Crisis, ed. by Keach, Fulton, and Gardner, pp. 156-61; Martin Deutsch, "The Disadvantaged Child and the Learning Process," In Education in a Depressed Area, ed. by Passow, pp. 163-80.

16. Gladwin, Poverty, U.S.A.

17. Julian Rotter and Pearl Mayo Gore, "A Personality Correlate of Social Action," Journal of Personality, XXXI (1963), 58-64.

18. Julian Rotter, "Generalized Expectancies for Internal vs. External Control of Reinforcement," Psychological Monographs: General and Applied LXXX (1966), 2.

19. Elton Mayo, The Social Problems of the Industrial Civilization (Boston: Division of Research, Graduate School of Business Administration, Harvard University, 1945).

20. Lester Coch and John R. P. French, Jr., "Overcoming Resistance to Change," Human Relations, I, No. 4 (1948), 512-32.

21. Study cited in Carol Lopate, et al, "Some Effects of Parent and Community Participation on Public Education," ERIC Document No. ED 027 359.

22. Edward A. Fleishman, "Attitude Versus Skill Factors in Work Group Productivity," Personnel Psychology, XVIII (1965), 253.

23. Lois C. Lawrence and Patricia Cain Smith, "Group Decision and Employee Participation," Journal of Applied Psychology XXXIX (October, 1955), pp. 334-37.

In the field of education Coleman found that a student's perception of control over one's environment is positively related to educational success. The attitudes toward self and the feelings of being able to determine one's future influence academic achievement far more than such variables as class size, teacher qualifications, physical conditions of schools. Coleman stated, "the extent to which an individual feels that he has some control over his destiny appears to have a stronger relationship to achievement than do all the school factors together." Equality of Educational Opportunity (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1966).

24. Ronald Lippitt and Ralph K. White, "An Experimental Study of Leadership and Group Life," In Readings in Social Psychology, ed. by Maccoby, Newcomb, and Hartley, pp. 496-511.

25. Malcolm G. Preston and Roy K. Heintz, "Effects of Participatory versus Supervisory Leadership on Group Judgement," The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology XLIV (July, 1949), 345-55.

26. A. Paul Hare, "Small Group Discussion with Participatory and Supervisory Leadership," The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, XLVIII (April, 1953), 273-75.

27. Also see William F. Fox, "Group Reaction to Two Types of Conference Leadership," Human Relations, X, No. 3 (1957), 279-89; Robert C. Ziller, "Four Techniques of Group Decision Making Under Uncertainty," Journal of Applied Psychology, XLI (December, 1957), 384-88; Herbert Thelen and J. Withall, "Three Frames of Reference: The Descriptions of Climate," Human Relations, II, No. 2 (1949), 159-76;

H. V. Perkins, "Climate Influences Group Learning," Journal of Educational Research, XLV (1951), 115-19; Ned Flanders, "Personal-Social Anxiety as a Factor in Experimental Learning Situations," Journal of Educational Research, XLV (1951), 100-110; Thomas Gordon, Group-Centered Leadership: A Way of Releasing the Creative Power of Groups (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1955).

28. See, for example, Gabriel A. Almond and Sidney Verba, The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), pp. 300-22; and Seymour Martin Lipset, Martin A. Trow, and James S. Coleman, Union Democracy: The Internal Mechanics of the International Typographical Union (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1956).

29. Helene Levens, "Organizational Affiliation and Powerlessness: A Case Study of the Welfare Poor," Social Problems, XNI (Summer, 1968), 30.

30. Richard Cloward and James Jones, "Social Class: Educational Attitudes and Participation," In Education in Depressed Areas, ed. by A. H. Passow (New York: Bureau of Publications. Teachers' College, Columbia University, 1963), pp. 190-216.

31. This model does not address directly the issue of political power outside of educational issues. An investigation of that dimension is beyond the scope of this research. Only school-related political influence was analyzed.

32. To control for self-selection the levels of participation in committee variable were cross-tabulated with a series of variables which were general indicators of social attitudes and behavior. The following variables were cross-tabulated: age, income, education, length of residence, distance from school, academic achievement of children, feelings of control over personal destiny, feelings of control over the federal, state, and municipal government, and voting patterns. No significant differences were found in the distributions on these variables between people who perceived the committees and were active, people who perceived the committees but were inactive, and people who did not perceive the committee and were inactive. These findings suggest that self-selection was not the cause of the positive relationships exhibited by Tables 1-3.

The similarity among respondents with different levels of participation in the committee structure on the control variables created conditions close to those of the quasi-field experiment. The non-preceivers of the committee structure served as the quasi-control group. The perception of and/or participation in the committee served as the experimental variable. Most other key social indicators were constant. These conditions suggested the possibility of a causal relationship.

33. Data from an urban school associated with a citizens' advisory council and a parochial school associated with a mothers' club are in the process of being analyzed.